

# Port Townsend Ferry Terminal Preservation and Improvement Project Environmental Review Update

Fall 2006

## WSF Nears Completion of Port Townsend Ferry Terminal Environmental Review

The Port Townsend Ferry Terminal Preservation and Improvement Project proposed action is being analyzed as part of an environmental review process required by the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). The process has included several steps that will culminate with an Environmental Determination in early 2007. The environmental review process consists of the following steps:

- Scoping
- Discipline Reports
- Environmental Checklists
- Environmental Determination

### Scoping

The environmental review began in October 2005 with a ‘scoping’ period when the public and agencies were invited to comment on the proposed action and the range of issues to study during the environmental review. Comments submitted during scoping helped determine what was analyzed in the project’s technical environmental reports.

### Discipline Reports

Following scoping, technical Discipline Reports were prepared to analyze the design for the new Port Townsend Ferry Terminal. Two sets of reports were prepared. One looked at the environmental impacts of the new terminal and the other studied impacts associated with each of the three vessels being considered for the Keystone-Port Townsend route (65 car, 100 car, 124-144 car). By themselves, these technical reports will not be used to decide which vessel will be used on the route. The reports will be used to help inform the environmental review for the Keystone Project. A vessel decision is expected to be made as

part of that project. The Port Townsend Discipline Reports reviewed existing conditions, identified potential impacts, and recommended measures to mitigate for those impacts. The reports analyzed the possibility that any one of the three vessel sizes being considered for the Port Townsend–Keystone route may eventually use the Port Townsend Ferry Terminal.

### Discipline reports covered a range of topics including:

Port Townsend Ferry Terminal reports:  
Air Quality, Geology and Soils, Marine Waterways, Water Quality, Fisheries, Wildlife, Hazardous Materials, Noise, Energy, Land Use, Social and Recreation, Economics, Public Services and Utilities, Historic and Archaeological Resources, Visual Quality, and Traffic and Transportation.

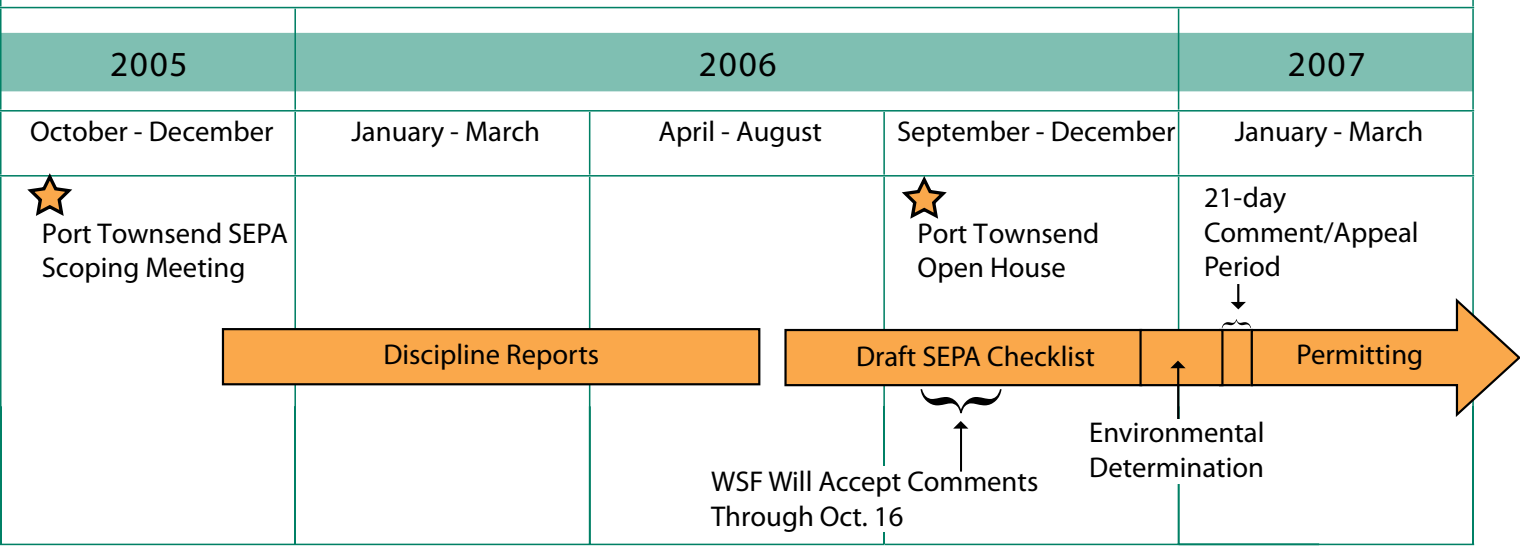
Vessel (65 car, 100 car, 124-144 car) reports:  
Emissions, Energy, Wake Wash, Noise, and Water Quality.

### Environmental Checklists and Environmental Determination

Based on the findings of the technical reports, WSF has made a preliminary “threshold determination” that the potential impacts of the project are not significant. Draft environmental checklists have been prepared that summarize the findings and conclusions of the technical reports. These draft SEPA Checklists are available for public and agency comment on the project website or by request. All comments are requested by October 16, 2006.

Input from the public and consultation with agencies and tribes will be considered prior to issuing the environmental determination, which is expected in early 2007.

SEPA Process for the Port Townsend Ferry Terminal Preservation and Improvement Project



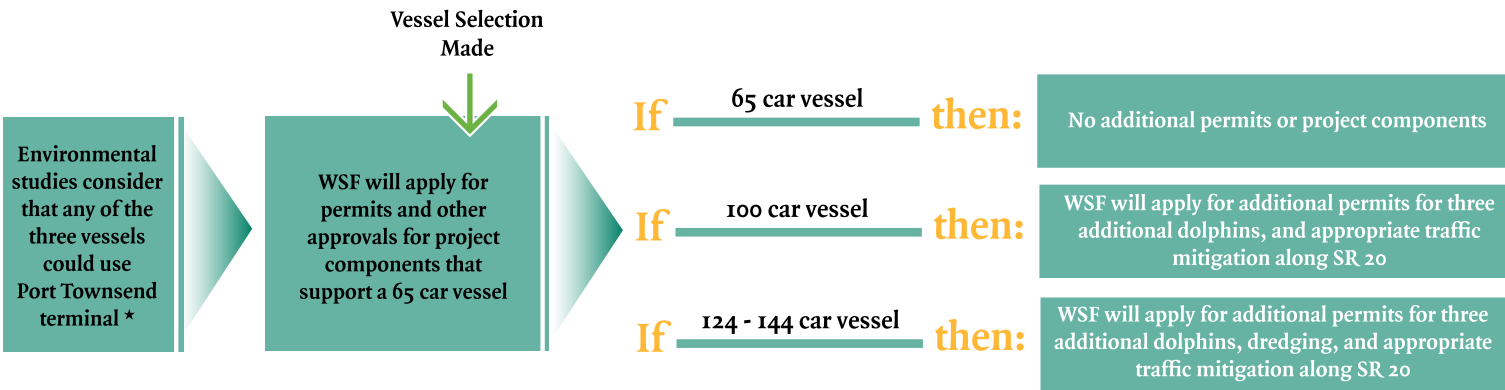
Key Findings of the Environmental Studies

- The project will remove the equivalent of five linear miles of creosote-treated timber pilings, eliminating a source of creosote leaching into Port Townsend Bay.
- Noise from pile driving affects some aquatic species, but limitations on when work can occur in the water, often called ‘fish windows,’ are designed to protect juvenile salmon.
- Studies show that a small amount of eelgrass will be lost due to the additional overwater coverage from an extended dock. That loss will be mitigated by planting eelgrass in an area adjacent to the trestle.
- Water quality at the existing stormwater outfall to Port Townsend Bay will improve because new treatment technology will reduce sediments and associated pollutants.
- When the terminal is reconfigured and expanded, approximately 19 parking spaces will be lost. They could be replaced by restriping the parking lot in the adjacent retail property.
- Ferry off-loading produces vehicle surges on SR 20. Studies show that these surges will be larger if a 100 car or 124- 144 car vessel is chosen for the route. Mitigation packages for each vessel are designed to minimize the impacts of any vessel used on the route in the future.
- The shading effects of the new dock could impact juvenile salmon movement. New lighting technology and solar tubes will increase light under the dock and help enable fish passage.



What’s next? Permitting and Construction

Due to urgent maintenance needs and inadequate space to accommodate projected growth, WSF needs to move forward with the Port Townsend ferry terminal project before a decision is made about what vessel will operate on the route. In order to keep the Port Townsend project moving forward, WSF will only apply for permits and approvals for the project components that support a 65 car vessel, as this is the same size that is used on the route today. This permitting process will take approximately one year. If another vessel size other than the 65 car is eventually selected through the Keystone project, WSF will separately apply for permits and approvals needed to construct those project components that would support a larger vessel. The following chart illustrates this permitting strategy.



\* Regardless of which vessel size is eventually selected, the Environmental Checklist should not need to be revised.

View the Environmental Studies

All environmental documentation for the Port Townsend Ferry Terminal Preservation and Improvement Project, including Discipline Reports and both draft SEPA Checklists, is available on the project website or in hard copy by request. Comments on these documents are requested by October 16, 2006.

Visit the project website at [www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/ferries/pttownpreserv](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/ferries/pttownpreserv)

We welcome questions and comments at any time

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